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A Diamond touch, to accelerate Jewellery and luxury Industry

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Design Connect attains a Great Success!



Design Connect 2019, a platform for jewellery designers to help connect and collaborate with manufacturers and retailers, was well received. Held in Mumbai, at the last week of June, the event organised by Gem and Jewellery Skill Council of India (GJSCI) and Women's Jewellery Association (WJA) - India Chapter witnessed more than 35 jewellery manufacturers and retailers conducting interview rounds with 100+ jewellery designers.

Ms. Nirupa Bhatt, President, WJA-India Chapter moderated a panel discussion on the topic, "Designers – Path to Success." The panellists included Ms. Poonam Soni, Designer; Ms. Vaishali Banerjee, Managing Director – Platinum Guild India; Mr. Aftab Bandukwala, Director, V-Design Architectural Solutions; and Mr. Colin Shah, Vice Chairman, GJEPC and Managing Director, Kama Schachter. The panellists shared insights on how jewellery designers can seek inspirations, how they need to build an understanding of jewellery manufacturing techniques, how they need to identify trends, build stories and come up with exciting designs to meet consumers' demands.

Designers Indra Jadwani and Hetal Vakil, IIGJ Faculty Sushma Sawant and Swati Sangekar, and GIA Instructor Sajiri Barve were the Mentors guiding the designers. The designers both, fresher and experienced, got an opportunity to interact with these mentors and seek guidance on their career paths in the field of jewellery designing.

"I believe in fresh talent and encouraging them. With a platform like Design Connect, talented jewellery designers will now have access to working opportunities with jewellery manufacturers and retailers," said Mr. Sanjay Kothari, Chairman, GJSCI. "Looking at the response and the need, GJSCI is planning to conduct Design Connect in other cities too. Events of such kind would also be organised for other segments of the gem and jewellery

industry for job seekers in the future," he added. "I would like to thank GJEPC, GJC, IBJA and GIA for inviting their members and students to the event. I'd also like to thank all the participants for making Design Connect a success."

Ms. Bhatt added, "It is a unique platform for both, fresher and experienced jewellery designers. They were excited to meet manufacturers and retailers, and seek opportunities to collaborate. This has the potential to present opportunities for the designers, manufacturers and retailers to collectively raise the consumer desirability for purchasing jewellery."

Recruiting companies at Design Connect were extremely pleased with the quality of the designers and complimented GJSCI and WJA for putting Design Connect together. "A great initiative and a platform for connecting with young designers," said Pradnya Mhaske, Design & Merchandising Head, CaratLane. Jimit Zaveri, AVP – Product Development, Kama Schachter, said, "The scale at which we met fresh and bright talent was truly phenomenal. GJSCI should be organising Design Connect twice a year. An awesome initiative!"

Even the designers felt that Design Connect provided access to many companies in one place. Shireen's Creazione's Soni Amin, a WJA member, said, "It's great to witness collaboration between manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers to interact with budding as well as established designers." A jewellery design fresher, Shital Anand said, "It's a unique initiative and we've got a great amount of exposure meeting these companies. Even the mentoring sessions were good and really helpful."

GJSCI also felicitated the winners of the 'Anant – The Design Competition' that aimed at promoting design development, product innovation and diversification of India's four heritage jewellery art forms Thewa, Gajra, Tarakasi and Hupari Payal. First prize winner: Ms. Sakshi Agarwal; second prize winner: Ms. Varuni Goyal; third prize winner: Ms. Pooja Mishra, and consolation prize winners: Ms. Shreya Nath, Ms. Namrata Singh, Ms. Aashi Jain, and Ms. Smriti Agarwal. Mr. Kothari added, "I'd like to congratulate the winners of 'Anant – The Design Competition'. These young, focused jewellery designers will go a long way in their careers and I wish them great success ahead."

Design Connect has been supported by GIA (Gemological Institute of America), Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC), All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) and more.

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